

Message Text

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TO AMEMUASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE 0538

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NODIS

E.O. 11652: X-GDS-2

TAGS: RH, UK, IR

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: APPROACH TO THE SHAH

1. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR US-UK
TO APPROACH SHAH AND REQUEST THAT HE URGE BISHOP MUZOREWA
TO GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO ATTENDANCE AT AN ALL-
PARTIES MEETING. IN JULY 9 CONVERSATION SHAH EXPRESSED
KEEN INTEREST IN RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS TO UNDER SECRETARY
NEWSOM AND SAID THAT HE HAD GIVEN LIMITED FINANCIAL
SUPPORT TO MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT
THE SHAH WOULD WELCOME OUR REQUESTS FOR COOPERATION IN
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OUR SOUTHERN AFRICAN NEGOTIATING EFFORTS.

2. ACCORDINGLY, EMBASSY, LONDON IS ASKED TO DISCUSS
ON PRIORITY BASIS WITH FCO POSSIBILITY OF A JOINT
APPROACH BY US-UK AMBASSADORS TO THE SHAH, OR HIS
PRINCIPAL ADVISORS, IN WHICH THE FOLLOWING POINTS WOULD
BE MADE:

A. THE SITUATION IN RHODESIA IS DETERIORATING.

THE SALISBURY AGREEMENT HAS NOT GAINED THE WIDESPREAD AFRICAN BACKING THAT ITS SUPPORTERS HAD HOPED FOR. THE AMNESTY PROGRAM HAS MET WITH ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS. THE MAJORITY OF THE GUERRILLA FORCES CLEARLY LACK SUFFICIENT CONFIDENCE IN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO WARRANT GIVING UP THEIR ARMS.

B. GIVEN THESE CONDITIONS, WE MAY BE APPROACHING A SITUATION OF NO-RETURN. THE INTERNAL PARTIES MAY MOVE FORWARD WITH THEIR PLANS FOR ELECTIONS AND THE INSTALLATION OF A NOMINALLY MAJORITY-RULED GOVERNMENT, WHICH MIGHT PROVE INCAPABLE OF PACIFYING THE COUNTRY OR BOLSTERING THE ECONOMY. THE GUERRILLA LEADERSHIP WOULD PROBABLY STEP UP THE FIGHTING, CONVINCED OF ITS ULTIMATE VICTORY. THE RESULT MIGHT BE A BLACK VS. BLACK CIVIL WAR, WITH GREATER INSTABILITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AS A WHOLE, AND FURTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR SOVIET AND CUBAN INTERVENTION.

C. US-UK BELIEVE THAT IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO BRING THE PARTIES TOGETHER FOR AN ATTEMPT AT NEGOTIATIONS. FOR SEVERAL MONTHS WE HAVE SUGGESTED AN ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE AS THE BEST MEANS OF FOSTERING THE TYPE OF DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS WE HAVE IN MIND.

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D. AT DAR ES SALAAM IN APRIL THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AGREED TO ATTEND SUCH A MEETING. THE MEMBERS OF THE SALISBURY GROUP WERE INITIALLY NEGATIVE. HOWEVER, AS THEY HAVE MORE REALISTICALLY APPRAISED THEIR SITUATION THEY HAVE BECOME LESS OPPOSED. WE ARE NOW SUGGESTING A PRIVATE MEETING OF ONLY THE PRINCIPALS WITH ONE OR TWO AIDES IN A SECLUDED ENVIRONMENT. THE MEETING WOULD BE CHAIRED BY DR. OWEN AND SECRETARY VANCE. SMITH IS WILLING TO ATTEND, AND WE THINK SITHOLE AND CHIEF CHIRAU WOULD GO ALONG AS WELL.

E. THE PRINCIPAL OPPONENT OF THE ALL-PARTIES MEETING IS BISHOP MUZOREWA. DESPITE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FOR SUCH A MEETING AMONG SOME WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY, HE REMAINS GENERALLY NEGATIVE TOWARD THE IDEA. MUZOREWA IS APPARENTLY FEARFUL THAT AN ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD BRING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT INTO A SETTLEMENT WOULD FURTHER ERODE HIS POPULAR SUPPORT AND MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO ATTAIN THE POLITICAL POWER HE NOW SEES WITHIN HIS GRASP.

F. WE HAVE TOLD THE BISHOP THAT HE HAS NOTHING TO LOSE BY ATTENDING AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING, AND THAT IN DOING

SO HE WOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT HE IS PREPARED TO LEAVE
NO STONE UNTURNED IN HIS SEARCH FOR PEACE. FURTHER, WE
HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE CAN ATTEND WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS.
WE ASSUME THAT EACH OF THE PARTIES WILL COME TO THE
CONFERENCE TABLE SUPPORTING THEIR OWN PROPOSALS FOR A
SETTLEMENT, WHICH, IN HIS CASE WILL BE THE SALISBURY
AGREEMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR ALL
OF THE PARTIES TO COMPROMISE. WE SHALL ACCEPT ANY
SETTLEMENT, CONSISTENT WITH OUR OWN PRINCIPLES, WHICH IS
SATISFACTORY TO THE PARTIES THEMSELVES.

G. WE BELIEVE THAT A MESSAGE FROM THE SHAH TO THE
BISHOP, URGING HIS PARTICIPATION IN AN ALL-PARTIES
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MEETING MIGHT BE INSTRUMENTAL IN CONVINCING MUZOREWA THAT
FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AT AN ALL-
PARTIES MEETING WOULD BE WORTHWHILE.

3. FOR TEHRAN: PLEASE TAKE NO ACTION ON THIS CABLE
UNTIL DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN INFORMED OF FCO'S RESPONSE.
YOUR COMMENTS IN ADVANCE OF FCO RESPONSE ARE, OF COURSE,
WELCOMED. VANCE

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